

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

JOINT STAFF REPORT
WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 6
Columbia River Compact
March 8, 2006

Fisheries under consideration: Non-Indian commercial salmon and smelt fisheries

Management guidelines and run forecasts for the 2006 spring season were presented in the Winter Fact Sheet #2 (January 26, 2006)

NON-INDIAN COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

2006 Commercial Smelt Fisheries

- The Level 1 mainstem Columbia River commercial fishery currently consists of two 9-hour fishing periods per week (7 AM-4 PM Mondays and Thursdays) and is scheduled to continue through March 31.
- Mainstem Columbia River smelt landings total 13,221 pounds through March 2 with no landings reported since February 13. However, some smelt were observed in the mainstem during salmon test fishing on Sunday March 5.
- The Level 1 Cowlitz River commercial fishery is the only Washington tributary commercial fishery open and consists of two 6-hour fishing periods per week (6 PM-Midnight Sundays and Wednesdays) and is scheduled to occur January 1-March 31. No Washington tributary landings have been reported to date. There is no significant presence of smelt in the tributaries.
- Industry has requested modification of the on-going mainstem smelt fishery, by moving the fishing period allowed on Thursdays to Saturdays, in order to avoid conflict with commercial salmon fishing periods.
- Staff has considered the request and has made the following recommendation:

<i>Recommendation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Joint Staff recommends modifying commercial smelt fishing periods in the mainstem Columbia River as follows:	
Season:	Two 9-hour weekly fishing periods on Mondays and Fridays effective March 9, 2006 through March 31, 2006. Open hours are 7 AM to 4 PM.
Area:	Zones 1-5.
Gear:	Gill net, dip nets, or trawls as per permanent regulations.
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear.
Miscellaneous:	Quick Reporting Rule in effect for Washington buyers.

- The recommendation is consistent with a Level 1 fishery.
- The recommendation will avoid conflict with both the commercial salmon fishing periods and the recreational fleet.

2006 Winter Salmon Commercial Fishery

- Three large mesh ($\geq 8''$) winter salmon fishing periods have occurred in Zones 1-4, upstream to Kelley point with one 18-hour period on Feb 23-24 and two 24-hour periods on March 2-3 and March 7-8.
- Preliminary landings from the March 7-8 period include 111 Chinook and 11 sturgeon for a combined winter salmon/sturgeon season total of 392 spring Chinook and 337 sturgeon.
- Based on visual observations, lower river Chinook comprised 88% of the landings for all three winter salmon fishing periods combined (31% sample rate).
- Preliminary landings for Select Area winter fisheries (February 15-March 5) total 29 spring Chinook, including two upriver fish, and three white sturgeon landed in Youngs Bay. No fish have been landed in Blind Slough or Deep River.
- Non-Indian commercial (mainstem and Select Area) upriver spring Chinook impacts to date are estimated to be 0.041%, or 6.3% of the 0.645% commercial impact guideline.

Spring Chinook Fishery 2006 - Preliminary Observation Data																					
Columbia River	2006	Mesh Size (Inches)	# Drifts	Lower R.			Upriver			Chinook no VSI			Total Chinook	Ratio	Total Steelhead	Steelhead				% Upriver Chinook	% Marked Chinook
Fishery	Date			Clipped	No Clip	Unk	Clipped	No Clip	Unk	Clipped	No Clip	Unk		Chinook /Steelhead		Clipped	No Clip	Unk	DNA count		
Full Fleet	Feb 23-24	≥8"	25	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1.0	2	1	1	0	1	0%	100%
Test	Feb 28-29	4 ¼"	13	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	6	0.5	12	6	6	0	6	33%	100%
Full Fleet	Mar 2-3	≥8"	43	13	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	17	17.0	1	1	0	0	0	6%	94%
Test	Mar 5	4 ¼"	14	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	1.4	5	3	2	0	1	14%	86%
Full Fleet	Mar 7-8	≥8"	36	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	6	3.0	2	1	1	0	1	50%	67%

Recommendation	
Season:	Noon Thursday March 9 through 6 AM Friday March 10, 2006 (18 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-4, upstream to Kelley Point.
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokommin-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, and Lewis-B.
Gear:	8" minimum and 9 3/4" maximum mesh size restriction. Use of monofilament nets is allowed. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, sturgeon, and shad
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear that attended a state-sponsored workshop concerning live capture commercial fishing techniques.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Regulations were adopted at January 26, 2006 Compact, which include: Use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, net length restrictions and lighted buoy requirements. Cooperation of vessel operators to allow state monitors onboard to observe and collect data is also required.
Quick Reporting Rule for Washington buyers.	

- Chinook landings for the proposed fishing period are estimated at 300-400 Chinook, and the catch is expected to be primarily lower river stock.
- Expected upriver spring Chinook impacts associated with the proposed fishing period are $\leq 0.08\%$ for a mainstem total $\leq 0.12\%$ which is $\leq 22\%$ of the mainstem commercial impacts available.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff is recommending a Compact hearing be scheduled for Monday March 13 at the WDFW office at 2108 Grand Blvd, Vancouver WA, 98661 with time to be decided.